

Message Text

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UNCLAS TORONTO 2340

E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS: PINT, SOPN, CA
SUBJECT:TORONTO STAR CALLS FOR FEDERAL/PROVINCIAL ACTION ON QUEBEC

REF: TORONTO 2191

1. IN ITS DECEMBER 18 LEAD EDITORIAL "TIME FOR ACTION ON QUEBEC," THE TORONTO STAR CALLED FOR "INITIATIVES FROM OTTAWA; INITIATIVES FROM FEDERALISTS WITHIN QUEBEC; AND INITIATIVES FROM OTHER PREMIERS, ESPECIALLY THOSE LIKE ONTARIO'S BILL DAVIS WHOSE PROVINCES STAND TO BE MOST SEVERELY AFFECTED IF CANADA BREAKS UP," IF CANADA IS TO BE SAVED. THE STAR NOTED THAT "RENE LEVESQUE SHOULD HAVE WIPED AWAY ANY REMAINING DOUBTS THIS WEEK THAT HE IS SET ON GETTING QUEBEC OUT OF CONFEDERATION."

2. THE STAR THAN PRESSED FOR ADOPTION OF THE NEW FRAMEWORK WHICH THE NEWSPAPER PROPOSED IN A SERIES OF EDITORIALS (SEE REFTEL). THE PAPER WROTE THAT THE FEDERALIST MESSAGE SHOULD BE THAT OF "A TRULY COOPERATIVE FEDERALISM, BASED ON NEW DIVISION OF POWERS FOR ALL PROVINCES THAT WANT THEM."

3. THE STAR OBSERVED THAT THE REAL QUESTION IS "WILL TRUDEAU
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ACT IN TIME? IT MAY BE THAT HE LACKS THE FLEXIBILITY OR TEMPERAMENT TO CHANGE, OR THAT HE SIMPLY DISAGREES THAT THIS APPROACH WOULD WORK. SO FAR HE HAS BEHAVED AS IF HE BELIEVES TRADITIONAL BARGAINING TACTICS WILL BE ENOUGH." COMMENTING THAT THE TRUDEAU GOVERNMENT "LACKS THE SUPPORT OF MAY CANADIANS," THE STAR REITERATED ITS IDEA OF "BRINGING SOME DISTINGUISHED

CANADIANS TO OTTAWA." THE STAR CONCLUDED THAT "THE WORST
THING THAT COULD HAPPEN IS THAT THE CABINET BECOMES PREOCCUPIED
WITH ITS OWN RE-ELECTION, AND LETS LIBERAL INTERESTS GET AHEAD
OF NATIONAL INTERESTS.

"THE COUNTRY HAS ENTERED A CRUCIAL CHAPTER IN ITS HISTORY.
THERE IS A CHANCE FOR A NEW COMPACT BETWEEN OTTAWA AND THE
PROVINCES. BUT DRIFT AND DELAY -- OR STUBBORNNESS AND
INFLEXIBILITY -- COULD MAKE THIS THE FINAL CHAPTER. THAT'S WHY
FEDERALIST INITIATIVES ARE NEEDED NOW."
DIGGINS

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